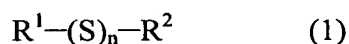


AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A flavor precursor composition comprising as an active ingredient

a flavor precursor compound which is an organic compound represented by Formula (1):



wherein ~~n represents an integer of 1 to 3~~ n is 2,  $R^2$  is selected from the group consisting of 2-Furfuryl, 2-Methyl-3-furyl, 5-Methyl-2-furfuryl, 3-Furyl, 1-(2-Furyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl-3-furylthio)ethyl, 2-Furyl, 2-Thenyl, 2-Methyl-3-thienyl, 5-Methyl-2-thenyl, 3-Thienyl, 1-(2-Thienyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl-3-thienylthio)ethyl, 2-Thienyl and hydrogenated forms thereof and  $R^1$  ~~represents the residue of a compound~~ is a sulfur-containing amino acid or peptide selected from the group consisting of cysteine, homocysteine, glutathione,  $\gamma$ -glutamylcysteine, and cysteinylglycine ~~from which the mercapto group has been removed~~ wherein the mercapto group of said sulfur-containing amino acid or peptide is present in the disulfide bond of the organic compound represented by Formula (1).

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 1 wherein the ~~sulfide~~ disulfide bond in said flavor precursor compound is cleaved using a reducing compound.

4. (Currently Amended) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 1 wherein the ~~sulfide~~ disulfide bond in said flavor precursor compound is cleaved using a compound exerting its reducing ability via a reversible reaction.

5. (Currently Amended) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 1 wherein the ~~sulfide~~ disulfide bond in said flavor precursor compound is cleaved using a compound having a free mercapto group.

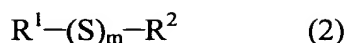
6. (Currently Amended) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 1 wherein the ~~sulfide~~ disulfide bond in said flavor precursor compound is cleaved by heating.

7. (Currently Amended) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 1 wherein the ~~sulfide~~ disulfide bond in said flavor precursor compound is cleaved by altering the pH.

8. (Currently Amended) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 1 wherein the ~~sulfide~~ disulfide bond in said flavor precursor compound is cleaved by an electric reducing action.

9. (Currently Amended) A novel sulfide compound which is an organic compound

represented by Formula (2):



wherein m represents an integer of 2 or 3,  $R^2$  is selected from the group consisting of 2-Furfuryl, 2-Methyl-3-furyl, 5-Methyl-2-furfuryl, 3-Furyl, 1-(2-Furyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl-3-furylthio)ethyl, 2-Furyl, 2-Thienyl, 2-Methyl-3-thienyl, 5-Methyl-2-thienyl, 3-Thienyl, 1-(2-Thienyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl-3-thienylthio)ethyl, 2-Thienyl and hydrogenated forms thereof and  $R^1$  ~~represents the residue of a compound~~ is a sulfur-containing amino acid or peptide selected from the group consisting of cystine, cysteine, homocysteine, glutathione,  $\gamma$ -glutamylcysteine, and cysteinylglycine ~~from which the mercapto group has been removed~~ wherein the mercapto group of said sulfur-containing amino acid or peptide is present in the disulfide or trisulfide bond of the organic compound represented by Formula (2).

and or

a novel compound which is an organic compound represented by Formula (3):



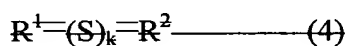
wherein  $R^2$  is selected from the group consisting of 2-Methyl-3-furyl, 5-Methyl-2-furfuryl, 3-Furyl, 1-(2-Furyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl-3-furylthio)ethyl, 2-Furyl, 2-Methyl-3-thienyl, 5-Methyl-2-thienyl, 3-Thienyl, 1-(2-Thienyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl-3-thienylthio)ethyl, 2-Thienyl and hydrogenated forms thereof and  $R^1$  ~~represents the residue of a compound~~ selected from the group consisting of cysteine, homocysteine, glutathione,  $\gamma$ -glutamylcysteine, and cysteinylglycine from which the mercapto group has been removed is an amino acid other than cysteine.

10. - 15. (Canceled)

16. (Previously Presented) A food or drink comprising a flavor precursor composition of Claim 1.

17. (Previously Presented) A food or drink comprising the sulfide compound of Claim 9.

18. (Currently Amended) A flavor precursor composition comprising as an active ingredient the sulfide compound of Claim 9 ~~a flavor precursor compound selected from the group consisting of a flavor precursor compound which is an organic compound represented by Formula (4):~~



~~wherein k represents an integer of 1 to 3, R<sup>2</sup> is selected from the group consisting of 2-Furfuryl, 2-Methyl 3-furyl, 5-Methyl 2-furfuryl, 3-Furyl, 1-(2-Furyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl 3-furylthio)ethyl, 2-Furyl, 2-Thienyl, 2-Methyl 3-thienyl, 5-Methyl 2-thienyl, 3-Thienyl, 1-(2-Thienyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl 3-thienylthio)ethyl, 2-Thienyl and hydrogenated forms thereof and R<sup>1</sup> represents the residue of a compound selected from the group consisting of cysteine, homocysteine, glutathione,  $\gamma$ -glutamylcysteine, and cysteinylglycine from which the mercapto group has been removed,~~

and a suitable excipient.

19. (Previously Presented) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 18 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor is cleaved using a reducing compound.

20. (Previously Presented) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 18 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor is cleaved using a compound exerting its reducing ability via a reversible reaction.

21. (Previously Presented) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 18 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor is cleaved using a compound having a free mercapto group.

22. (Previously Presented) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 18 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor is cleaved by heating.

23. (Previously Presented) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 18 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor is cleaved by altering the pH.

24. (Previously Presented) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 18 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor

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precursor is cleaved by an electric reducing action.

25. (Previously Presented) A food or drink comprising a flavor precursor composition of Claim 18.

26. (New) The flavor precursor composition of Claim 1, further comprising a suitable excipient.

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SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENT

Claims 2 and 10-15 were previously canceled.

Claims 1, 3-9, and 18 have been amended.

Claim 26 has been added.

The amendment of Claims 1 and 3-8 is supported by the specification as originally filed, for example at page 8, lines 3-13. The amendment of Claims 9 and 18 is supported by the specification as originally filed, for example at page 11, line 11 to page 12, line 14. New Claim 26 is supported by the specification as originally filed, for example at page 9, lines 4-14.

No new matter has been introduced by the present amendment.